THE NEW
SUNDAY EXPRESS

BENGALURU • SUNDAY • JULY 18, 2021 • ₹12.00 • PAGES 28 • LATE CITY EDITION

Rio Olympic silver medallist PV Sindhu leaving for Tokyo from the New Delhi international airport on Saturday | SAI

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TOKYO 2020

FIRST POSITIVE CASE AT THE OLYMPIC GAMES VILLAGE

Organisers confirmed that a resident tested positive for Covid on Friday. The person has been isolated and situation is under control

SUPPORT THE ATHLETES: BACH URGES LOCALS

IOC president Thomas Bach, who is already in Japan, urged the locals to "welcome these athletes here for the competition of their life. I would like once more to ask and to invite the Japanese people, humbly, to welcome and support the athletes from around the world." The German also said fans could yet attend a few of the competitions if the situation improves

INDIAN CONTINGENT LEAVES FOR TOKYO

- The first batch of Indian athletes left for Tokyo from New Delhi late on Saturday. It included both hockey teams. Shooters who reached Saturday from Croatia, will begin training from Monday
- Rowers, sailors and weightlifter are already in Tokyo and have already started training as they have no quarantine protocols | P15

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NUMBER OF INDIAN ATHLETES WHO WILL BE IN ACTION AT THE GAMES

Many contenders for the top post; Big announcement expected at BJP legislators' meet on July 26

No leadership change, says BSY, adds 'for now'

ANUSHA RAVI @ Bengaluru

"FOR now, I have been given the responsibility and I will work unitedly with everybody. For now, there is no confusion. National leaders have asked me to continue as Chief Minister and strengthen the party. It is our duty to do what they ask us to do," said Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa, speaking to reporters in Bengaluru after his two-day New Delhi trip.

The last 48 hours have been extremely action-packed and have kept the 78-year-old chief minister, his supporters as well as his baiters on their toes. Even as he vehemently denied reports of his resignation, Yediyurappa resigned to the fate to be decided by the party central leadership, reiterating that he has been asked to continue as chief minister 'for now'.

"Not at all. Not at all. Not at all," he said on Saturday morning when reports of his alleged resignation started surfacing. By Saturday evening, his pushback had lost some of its steam. Earlier in the day, he made back-to-back trips to meet BJP national president Jagat Prakash Nadda, Defence Minister and a close confidante Rajnath Singh and finally Home Minister Amit Shah. Every time he spoke to the media, he denied reports of his resignation. "All the meetings were fruitful. All our leaders expressed their desire for BJP to return to power in the State with more seats. I am committed to ensuring that. I have assured that we will work together to build the party," Yediyurappa said.

Chief Minister BS Yediyurappa greets Union Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi on Saturday

His stance is in line with the party's "amicable exit" strategy. In May this year *The New Sunday Express* had reported on how the BJP's Central leadership was looking for a smooth transition of power in Karnataka and Yediyurappa seems to have finally gotten on board with the plan.

While Yediyurappa's supporters insisted that he is here to stay and rumours of his resignation are untrue, the silence on the matter by the party Central leadership has emboldened other factions within the party. Party sources suggested that Yediyurappa's meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi was the last round of talks before making the shift in leadership official. They said that while Yediyurappa will be allowed to complete two years in office, he is set to cite his health as a reason to step down from the post and that he has also agreed to help the Central leadership find a replacement. P4

TIMELINE

FRIDAY EVENING: CM BS Yediyurappa flies to New Delhi on a chartered flight

FRIDAY 7 PM: He meets PM Narendra Modi

FRIDAY 8 PM: He meets newly-appointed ministers from Karnataka

SATURDAY MORNING: Reports of BSY's resignation surface

SATURDAY 10 AM: Yediyurappa refutes reports

SATURDAY 11 AM: He meets BJP national president JP Nadda

SATURDAY 11.40 AM: He reiterates he hasn't resigned

SATURDAY 12.30 PM: He meets Defence Minister Rajnath Singh

SATURDAY AFTERNOON: He meets Home Minister Amit Shah

SATURDAY EVENING: He returns to Bengaluru, says he will continue as CM for now

All our leaders expressed their desire for BJP to return to power in the State with more seats. I am committed to ensuring that — BS Yediyurappa, CM

Capt climbs down on Sidhu issue, gets his say in state Cong

RICHA SHARMA & HARPREET BAJWA @ New Delhi/Chandigarh

MUCH to Punjab Chief Minister Amarinder Singh's displeasure, arch rival **Navjot Singh Sidhu** is expected to be named the new state Congress chief with AICC general secretary and trouble shooter Harish Rawat, after meeting Amarinder on Saturday, saying the chief minister would accept any decision taken by the party high command.

However, Amarinder's ostensible climbdown from Friday, when he wrote to party president Sonia Gandhi and strongly opposed Sidhu's likely appointment, came only after the chief minister extracted his pound of flesh, according to those privy to the developments.

Sources said the party will have two or three working presidents under Sidhu but the CM will have a say in their appointments, given a free hand in a cabinet reshuffle and the government's running and he will also play a key role in the campaign committees for the assembly elections. The working presidents are likely to be from Malwa, Magha and Doaba regions of the state. Amarinder is also understood to have insisted that he would not meet Sidhu until the Congress MLA publicly apologises for his uncharitable comments on social media against the chief minister and criticism of the state government.

CONTINUED ON: P10

EXPRESS READ

Syrian Prez sworn in for 4th term

Damascus: Syrian President Bashar al-Assad was sworn in Saturday for a fourth seven-year term in the war-torn country, pledging to overcome the impact of Western economic sanctions and retake territory still out of his control after 10 years of fighting. P12

JAB-O-METER
TAKE YOUR SHOT

July 16 **38,79,917 doses**
July 17 **40,38,108 doses**

TOTAL DOSES **40,44,67,526**

NATIONWIDE	JULY 16	JULY 17
Fresh cases	38,949	38,079
Recoveries	40,026	43,916
Deaths	542	560

KARNATAKA	JULY 16	JULY 17
Fresh cases	1,806	1,869
Recoveries	2,748	3,144
Deaths	42	42

WITH THIS ISSUE

GUTS AND GLORY
PLUS 12 PAGES MAGAZINE

US pilots new quad with Pak, Af & Uzbekistan

PUSHKAR BANAKAR @ New Delhi

AMID escalating tension between Kabul and the Taliban, the US on Friday said it would be part of a new quadrilateral diplomatic platform, comprising Afghanistan, Uzbekistan and Pakistan, working towards inter-regional trade and long-term peace in the war-torn nation. However, analysts say the new quad may have far-reaching ramifications for China, Russia and India, forcing them to tailor their diplomacy to suit the emerging geopolitical situations.

Russia-based American analyst Andrew Korybko said the bloc gives the view that Pakistan's version of multi-alignment is more successful than India's. "It makes the US a stakeholder in Pakistan's stability, which could lead to the US putting pressure on India not to destabilise it through proxy," he said. P12

Stormy Monsoon Session likely, Oppn to corner govt

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

THE Monsoon Session of Parliament, starting Monday, is likely to be a stormy affair with the Opposition seeking to corner the Treasury benches on a host of issues, including inflation, fuel price rise, Covid-19 management, farmer agitation, constitution of the ministry of co-operatives among others.

The agenda would be set during Sunday's all-party meeting called by Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi to discuss key issues. The Opposition is expected to demand discussions on the handling of Covid-19 situation, rise in price, death of tribal activist Stan Swamy, controversial population control legislation by Uttar Pradesh government and Chief Justice of India's comment on the sedition law.

After the meeting, the leaders of the Opposition parties would get into a huddle to discuss coordination over key issues to be raised on the floor of the House. Rajya Sabha Chairman Venkaiah Naidu on Saturday held a meeting of floor leaders of various parties for coordination and seamless functioning of the Upper House. The floor leaders flagged issues needing detailed discussion during the session ending on August 13.

Meanwhile, Congress chief Sonia Gandhi has already asked senior leader Mallikarjun Kharge, who is the Leader of Opposition in Rajya Sabha, to reach out to other Opposition parties to garner support on common issues.

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Over 10 pc of children in Anganwadis malnourished

RAMKRISHNA BADESHI @ Kalaburagi

OVER 10 per cent of children below six years of age enrolled in Anganwadi centres spread across the state are found to be malnourished.

In the backdrop of the threat of a possible third wave, the State Government had conducted a survey in May to find out how many children were suffering from malnutrition and steps that needed to be taken to protect them from the pandemic. The survey found that 10.50 per cent of the surveyed 40,53,022 children are moderately malnourished and 0.19 per cent of children are severely malnourished. However, 89.32 per cent of the children are normal.

Of 4,25,369 moderately malnourished children, 1,92,377 (nearly 45 per cent) are from Kalyana Karnataka region, comprising Bidar, Kalaburagi, Yadgir, Raichur, Koppal and Ballari districts. Also, 3,356 or 51 per cent of 7,627 severely underweight children are from these parts of the State.

Belagavi district had the highest number of malnourished children -- 57,444 moderately malnourished and 658 severely malnourished. It is followed by Ballari, Raichur, Koppal, Vijayapura and Yadgir districts. Kodagu district has the least number of moderately underweight children at 3,356 and severely underweight children at 37.

HIGHLIGHTS

Number of Districts covered for survey in the State: **30**

Number of Anganawadis which conducted survey: **65,911**

Number of children with normal weight and height: **36,20,026**

Number of children moderately malnourished: **4,25,369**

Number of children severely malnourished: **7,627**

Begin next academic year by Oct 1, UGC tells varsities

PEARL MARIA D'SOUZA @ Bengaluru

THE University Grants Commission (UGC) has asked universities to start their academic session for first-semester students by October 1, and to complete admissions by September 30.

If there is a delay in declaring results for qualifying exams, higher educational institutions can start the academic session by October 18. Vacant seats must be filled by October 31, and relevant documents of qualifying exams can be accepted till December 31. For first-year undergraduate and postgraduate students, universities have been asked to commence classes only after the declaration of CBSE, ICSE and state board results. "We expect all school boards to declare results by July 31," said UGC guidelines. P7